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Sean Combs' Legal Team Seeks Acquittal or New Trial in Mann Act Case

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Attorneys representing music mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs have filed a motion requesting that his recent conviction under the Mann Act be overturned, or that he be granted a new trial. Combs is scheduled for sentencing on October 3 following a high-profile trial earlier this month in which he was convicted on two counts of transportation to engage in prostitution.

The 62-page motion, submitted to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York on Wednesday evening, challenges the scope of the Mann Act, formally known as the

White-Slave Traffic Act of 1910, arguing that the prosecution's interpretation was overly broad. Combs' attorneys contend that the statute does not apply to his actions, claiming there was insufficient evidence to prove he transported individuals with the intent to engage in prostitution, defined in court as "any sex for money."

The defense further argued that Combs did not act with a "commercial motive" and had no intention for the hired escorts to engage in sexual acts with him. According to the filing, this lack of intent and commercial exchange should exempt him from prosecution under the statute. The motion also raises constitutional concerns, asserting that compensating individuals for recorded sexual performances falls under "protected First Amendment activity."

A central point of the motion is the claim of "spillover prejudice," the idea that the jury's verdict on the Mann Act charges was unduly influenced by evidence related to other allegations. Combs was acquitted of two counts of sex trafficking and a more serious charge of racketeering conspiracy, yet the defense argues that inflammatory testimony tied to those charges unfairly impacted the outcome of the remaining counts.

The six-week trial included testimony from multiple witnesses, including women identified as former romantic partners. Accounts described alleged instances in which Combs arranged for male escorts to engage in drug-fueled sexual activity with his partners, while he observed and recorded the events. No evidence was presented indicating that Combs physically participated in these encounters, which witnesses described using the slang term "freak-offs."

In addition to the motion for acquittal or retrial, Combs' attorneys have also petitioned the court to release him on bail ahead of his sentencing. The proposal includes a \$50 million bond and a condition that Combs reside in his Miami home while awaiting further proceedings. The request argues that the case is unprecedented and maintains that the conduct in question, consensual arrangements between adults in a private setting, should not warrant incarceration under the Mann Act.

Presiding Judge Arun Subramanian, who oversaw the trial, previously denied bail immediately following the conviction. The judge cited provisions within the Mann Act that presume pre-sentencing detention in such cases.

Combs remains in custody as the court considers the latest motions filed by his defense team.